

Monu

magazine on urbanism

Potentially Beautiful by Sean Burkholder Beyond Kitsch by Dirk Hebel and Deane Simpson Sterile Rotterdam by Melisa Vargas The Anti-Urinator by Supersudaca Beauty and the Sublime by Joost Meuwissen The Revolving Transient by Lukas Reichel Pedaling Hope by Jen Petersen Microrayons by Bee Flowers Advanced City Camouflage by Cruz Garcia Stripped Bare by Nathalie Aguinaldo The Terrifying Century of Beautiful Urbanism by Bert de Muynck The Secrets behind the Making of a Beautiful City: Jakarta by Ilya Maharika A short Encounter with a Chair by Katerina Pertselaki Beautiful Urbanism by Pierre De Angelis Great Unraveling by Ju-Hyun Kim and Bohyun Kim The City Beautiful by Suzanne Loen A Typology of Mess Punkt by Jeremy Beaudry Big is beautiful by Jarrik Ouburg



BEAUTIFUL URBANISM

#06

We received a record number of high quality contributions for this issue. And even though the concept beauty remains elusive we think our issue is successful in shining some spotlights on the issue. One of the themes from the articles is that beauty in urbanism is what one could call an emergent quality. It rarely is in the object itself. It exists in the way we perceive spaces and objects, our vantage point. It is while wandering through the city, resolving contradictions, when we see things that jolt our imaginations that we experience beauty.

It can be a small detail such as obscure dots on the sidewalk that German civil engineers place all over the city to measure which propel **Jeremy Beaudry** along daydreaming trajectories as he assembles the dotted pattern of Berlin. Movement plays a central part, be it by bicycle as **Jen Petersen** describes or in future cable cars that **Lukas Reichelt** invents. Or within 30 years high resolution and real time aerial photography will open yet another façade of the city to our perception - the view of the roofs as **Ju-Hyun Kim and Bohyun Kim** predict.

But if it is not all just in our minds then there are some important tools for those who do care about who and what it is that is built and declared beautiful - or left for us to find the beauty in. How much leverage do we really have to imagine or stamp that which is beauti-

ful - if we must resolve ourselves between a complete rejection of the sorts of beauty that seems to have many followers - Disney architecture for example - to a naïve embracing of 30m high cowboy boots? Can we go truly Beyond Kitsch as **Dirk Hebel and Diane Simpson** suggest? Does the striving for a generic sense of beauty bear even more serious repercussions as **Ilya Maharika** argues in his study of Jakarta?

This is just a very small selection of the rich set of reflections on "beautiful urbanism" that this issue offers. Again the response to our topic by far exceeded what we had imagined and hoped for. We wish to thank all those who contributed to this magazine even if their articles could not be included. This issue is the first one to appear in collaboration with a new publisher and we want to thank the University of Kassel and especially Professor Wolfgang Schulze at the Institute for Urban Architectural Studies for generously supporting our previous issues.

Finally we want to dedicate this issue of Monu to Martin Schroeder who deeply cared about cities and their beauty although he would not easily admit to it. We count ourselves among the lucky ones who he inspired with his wit, humor and curiosity.

The Editors
January 2007
Bernd Upmeyer and Thomas Soehl

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Beautiful Urbanism

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Call for submissions>>

for Monu #7 **2nd rate Urbanism**

London, Tokyo, New York, Berlin, Moscow, Beijing, Johannesburg Rio or New Delhi... we all know the names on the A-list of cities and love to study and compare them. They are big, beautiful, dynamic, full of extremes and there is always a good story to be told. But who really lives in those places? A very small share of the world's population in the end. The vast majority of people, whether rich or poor live someplace else. The majority of urban life is at home in places we don't know. It is the places that are described as 1.5hr outside of New York or between Munich and Hamburg. 2nd rate cities that boast no particular qualities, with the dubious exception that they sometimes boast the record for "the place with the tallest church tower built between 1780 and 1795." Or once in a while one of these 2nd rate cities becomes famous because a ruthless dictator was born there – think Tikrit in Irak or Braunau in Austria.

In the upcoming 7th issue of Monu we want to explore 2nd rate urbanism. What is the character and quality of this seemingly generic urban life? What motivates people to live and work there? How does life differ in those C-list places from that in the big bright cities? What of politics, economy and culture? What role do these places play for the urban landscape in different countries?

To these and any other questions that you can think of, we invite your insights and analysis. We look forward to your writing and photography, speculation and sophisticated analysis -whether roughly outlined and collaged or beautifully written and arranged.

The next issue will appear in the summer of 2007. Contributions or questions should be sent to editors@monu.org by the end of May.

Yo estoy mirando

de los ojos

